इंडियन एयरलाइंस के जो रेजिडेंशियल प्लॉट्स लिए गए थे, उनकी अभी जरूरत नहीं है। इसलिए हमने अपने खर्चे में कटौती करने के लिए कुछ प्लॉट्स डीएलएफ में बेच दिए हैं, उनमें से कुछ प्लॉट्स अभी बाकी हैं जिनको बेचकर हम घाटे को पूरा करना चाहेंगे।

श्रीमती बिम्बा रायकर : उस पैसे का आपने क्या किया है ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR : Sir, he has not answered my question.

SHRI N. R. DASARI : Sir, he has not replied to the question.

SHRI K. V. KRISHNA MURTHY : Sir, he has not given the answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has given the answer. मिनिस्टर ने जवाब दिया है, उसके बाद मैंने नेक्सट क्वेश्चन के लिए कहा है। आप यूं मत करिए कि आप क्वेश्चन पूछने में ही दो मिनट लगाएं। सीधा क्वेश्चन करिए, सीधा जवाब मिलेगा। आपने जो सीधा क्वेश्चन किया है, उसका जवाब इन्होंने दे दिया है।

SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR : Sir, his answer is not correct.

श्री सभापति : अब करेक्ट या इनकरेक्ट के बारे में मैं कुछ नहीं कह सकता। Next question.

Production of Coal Bed Methane

*637. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ :

DR. A.K. PATEL :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) which region produces Coal Bed Methane in our country;

(b) how much of Coal Bed Methane is produced in the above region;

(c) whether there is any policy of Government on CBM; and

(d) what steps Government are taking to increase the production of CBM ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) As of date, there is no commercial production of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) in India.

(c) and (d) In order to harness the CBM as an alternative source of energy, the Government has, in 1997, formulated the policy for exploration and production of CBM which provides for award of blocks on the basis of International Competitive Bidding. In the first offer of blocks under the Policy, five blocks *i.e.* two blocks each in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh and one block in West Bengal, have been awarded. The contracts for all these five blocks have been signed two with the Consortium of Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), one with Essar Oil Limited and two with Reliance Industries Limited. In addition, the contracts for two blocks, *i.e.* one each in Jharkhand and West Bengal, have been signed with the consortium of ONGC and Coal India Limited (CIL). Also, the contract for one more CBM block in West Bengal has been signed with M/s. Great Eastern Energy Corporation Limited (GEECL).

SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ : Sir, Government has formulated a policy for exploration and production of CBM (Coal Bed Methane), in order to harness CBM as an alternative source of energy. Eight contracts have already been entered into. When is the Government likely to start the production from these eight blocks of CBM, and...

श्री सभापति : आप क्वेश्चन का जवाब सुन लीजिए।

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, these eight blocks have been given very recently. Out of that, in the Jharia block four test wells have been drilled, and in Raniganj, seven bore wells have been drilled. It would normally take three to four years to bring them entirely into commercial production.

SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: In this context, after exploration has started and after the production has started, what quantity of CBM is likely to be available?

SHRI RAM NAIK : We are lucky that in India, we are having very good coal deposits in the whole world. When we harness all the coal deposits, we shall get an estimated reserve of 1000 billion cubic metres, and that can be used as a substitute for natural gas in the local areas.

DR. A.K. PATEL: Mr. Chairman Sir, I hail from Mehsana district. It is one of the places ...

श्री सभापति : आप क्वेश्चन करिए।

DR. A.K. PATEL: Mehsana is a potential place for production of CBM. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to why the place has not been included in this.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, we are bringing out the second round of Coal Bed Methane blocks before the end of this month. In that, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu are the States where we are giving additional blocks, and those blocks will be offered before the end of this month. In Gujarat also, one block is included.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Fall in Economic Growth

*621. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the economic growth is gradually falling in each quarter;

(b) if so, the percentage of fall in the growth;

(c) what are the main reasons for this slippage; and

(d) what steps are being taken to improve the economic growth?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) has estimated the growth of real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost at 6.0 per cent, 5.8 per cent and 2.6 per cent in the first, second and third quarters of 2002-03 respectively.

(c) The main reason for the weakening of the growth momentum in the second and third quarters of 2002-03 is the fall in agricultural production. The CSO has estimated the growth in 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' sector at zero per cent in the second quarter and (-) 7.9 per cent in the third quarter of 2002-03, as compared with 4.4 per cent in the first quarter.

(d) On the agriculture front, the Budget for 2003-04 has proposed measures for developing horticulture, improving water management and ensuring adequate credit flow to the farm sector. Other initiatives to improve economic growth include promotion of infrastructure development by leveraging public money through private sector participation, promoting private investment and measures aimed at fiscal consolidation.